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PRESENTED BY

TWENTY YEARS

OF THE

Westborough Historical Society

AN ADDRESS BY THE

President, Rev. S. I. Briant, October 27, 1909.

WESTBOROUGH, MASS.
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The Address

The agreement for forming the Society was signed January 10, 1889, by twenty-three persons. The first meeting was held with Judge Forbes on February first. Two days later the officers were chosen.

President, Mr. J. A. Fayerweather

Vice President, Mr. B. B. Nourse.

Secretary and Treasurer, Mr. C. S. Henry.

Directors, Judge W. T. Forbes, Mr. E. C. Bates, Mrs. A. F. Judd.

The Society was incorporated February 28, 1889.

Historical Addreses.

The attention of the Society was at first given to matters of local interest, as we shall see later, But before long addresses were provided in order to awaken an interest in historical events.

The first of these was given in December, 1893, by Rev. A. Titus of Natick on "The Days of the N. E. Primer," with an exhibition of old manuscripts.

The next March Hon. A. S. Roe of Worcester, lectured on "The abolition of Fast Day and the observance of the nineteenth of April as a legal holiday." In April, a paper was read on "African Slavery in N. E.," by Mr. A. E. Brown of Bedford, with photographs and papers. In November, there was an essay on "Our Grandmothers' Thanksgiving," by Mrs. M. A. Fletcher of Bedford.

In March, 1895, Mr. R. Janney presented the subject of "Quakerism." He showed a certificate of his mother's marriage signed by sixty of those present. In May, Senator G. F. Hoar gave an address on "The opening of the North West." In November the address was on "The Scotch Irish in America" by Librarian S. S. Green of Worcester.

In December, 1896, Rev. A. E. Hylan lectured on "Christian Life as portrayed in the Catacombs."

In 1897, the January address was on "Footprints of the Nipmucks," by Mr.

J. C. Crane of Millbury. Specimens of their handiwork were exhibited. In February the address was on "Some Scenes in Pilgrim History," by Hon. A. T. Lord of Plymouth. In March, Mr. A. E. Brown told us of "A missing link in the history of the Old South Church, Boston." In April, Mr. F. B. Sanborn of Concord, gave an address on "John Brown, his purpose, trial, and the sequel in Concord."

In January, 1898, an address was given on "The Behring Sea and its wonderful and valuable seal inhabitants," by Dr. Mendenhall, president of the Worcester Polytechnic Institute. It was illustrated by the stereopticon. In February, there was a lecture on "An outline of the year 1861," by Mr. J. H. Merriam of South Framingham. In March, "The Power of History," was the theme treated by Ex-Gov. D. H. Chamberlain, of South Carolina, a former resident here, several of whose ancestors were buried in Memorial Cemetery.

The lecture in January, 1899, was on "The war with Spain chiefly in the Santiago Campaign," by Major H. B. Fairbanks. In February, "The battle of Lexington in America and England," was set forth by Rev. A. C. Staples of Lexington. In May, Mr. C. M. Fay related his war experiences and described a map of Andersonville prison which he presented to the Society.

In November, Miss S. D. Spurr read a paper on "Heraldry." Mrs. Metcalf illustrated the subjects with readings and Mr. Littlefield with heraldic drawings.

In April, 1901, Rev. A. D. Smith of Northborough spoke of "The Metta Katta Indians of Alaska."

Mr. H. Butterworth addressed us in January, 1902, on "Over the Andes." On March 17, Rev. J. J. Walker gave an address on "The early missionary of Ireland, St. Patrick," and Rev. A. E. Hylan gave select readings. In April, Rev. O. S. Davis of Newton told the story of "The Separatists in England and Holland."

In January, 1903, Mr. F. B. Sanborn addressed us on "The relation of Massachusetts to New Hampshire and Maine in the seventeenth century." In April, Rev. C. Stebbins of Framingham gave an address on "The Louisiana Purchase." In October we listened to an interesting paper by Mrs. Judd, on "Old Deerfield, its arts and crafts."

In February, 1904, Hon. A. S. Roe again spoke to us; this time on "The Governors of Massachusetts."

In February, 1905, Mr. Butterworth again visited us and gave a talk on "The old Court End of Boston. In April Dr. C. D. Wright of Clark University lectured on "Romantic Socialism."

In February, 1906, Mr. J. R. Anderson, a Scotchman, gave an address on "Robert Burns, Poet," reading several of Burns' poems. In April, there was an illustrated talk on "Traveling and Shooting in Asia," by Dr. W. Smith of Worcester.

In February, 1907, "Tales of Boston Harbor" was the subject of an illustrated lecture by Mr. Hasseltine of Boston. In March Rev. R. W. Wallace of Boston lectured on "The Story of Jamestown." The address in April was by Rev. A. Titus of Boston on "The time of the Old Bay Province, 1692 to 1775." In November, Mrs. Bates gave a talk on "Ancestry" and exhibited a copy of a genealogical register.

In February, 1909, Rev. Mr. Wheeler of Woodville spoke of his personal relations with the army as chaplain of the 18th colored regiment and of his recollections of President Lincoln.

In March, Miss Spurr read a paper on "A backward glance at the 19th century with a glimpse of the country doctor."

Travel Talks.

Besides these historical addresses we have been favored with many on travels abroad. At the meeting in December, 1895, Supt. T. F. Chapin took us with him in "A walk over a decisive battlefield," illustrated by the stereopticon. The next month we saw "Atlanta in the War of the Rebellion," with Mr. F. W. Forbes and "Atlanta and the Exposition," with Mr. B. A. Nourse.

In April, 1898, Mr. W. J. H. Nourse of Worcester took us with him on "The Expedition up the Nile for the Relief of General Gordon," and related many personal experiences.

In March, 1899, Rev. F. Nichols gave an account of "A Tramp Through Ireland," showing many articles of interest. In April, President Walker told of "A tour through Egypt," with the exhibition of many mementos.

In December there was a talk on "Reminiscences of a tour in Europe," by Rev. S. Perry of Boston, illustrated with photographs.

In February, 1900, Mr. J. L. Brigham took us with him on "A trip to Cuba and the Windward Isles," showing many articles he had collected.

The next January Mr. Brigham gave a graphic account of his journey to Jerusalem, the holy sepulchre, the Dead Sea, to Madeira, the Nile, the Pyramids, Cairo and to Gibralter, illustrated with many photographs. In February we saw "The Cathedrals of Europe" as portrayed by Rev. Mr. Nichols.

In December, 1904, Vice President Walker told an interesting story of his journeyings in Japan.

In January, 1908, the Thursday Club met with us and we listened to Judge and Mrs. Forbes on their "Observations Abroad."

Entertainments.

We have also shared in other gatherings of a more social character. In October, 1897, Rev. Mr. Weeks read an original story entitled "Cindy."

In January, 1898, Dr. Corey gave a stereopticon exhibition of pictures of "Yellowstone Park."

At a social in December, 1890, many dressed in old style garments. It closed with an old folks dance, Dr. Barrett manager.

Dr. Corey the next March presented through his stereopticon, pictures of "The mission buildings in California and great events in early N. E." In April there was a costume party at President Walker's. Some garments worn were two hundred years old. In May, we met in Grange Hall, where Dr. Corey exhibited "Westborough Past and Present."

On December 31, 1900, there was held "The End of the Century Sociable." The President spoke of the great changes in the century past. Superintendent Waldron read from Whittier's Centennial. The Vice-President read the 90th Psalm. "Auld Lang Syne" was sung and just as the century closed all joined in singing, the doxology, "Praise God from whom all blessings flow."

In March, 1901, at Grange Hall, Rev. A. T. Kempton of Fitchburg, told, with the aid of the stereopticon, "The Story of Evangeline." At a social in Decem-

ber, many ancient articles were considered and their uses explained.

In February, 1902, a band of minstrels visited us and entertained us with solos, choruses and various orchestral music.

The next February, a musicale was held. In March, in the Town Hall, Rev. Mr. Kempton gave a second illustrated lecture on "The Courtship of Miles Standish" with readings from Longfellow's poem.

In January, 1904, a paper on "Early National Music" was read by Miss G. E. Clark and several musical selections were rendered. In March, "The Cranford Play" was given in Grange Hall.

In January, 1905, there was a musicale by Miss A. F. Goddard.

In March, an entertainment in Grange Hall, entitled "Lend me five shillings."

In February, 1906, was presented the play "The Kleptomaniac."

In December, 1907, Miss Goddard read a paper on "Old Songs Illustrated" accompanied with several musical selections.

Field Days.

The field days of the Society call for separate mention. The first of these occurred in October, 1889, when there was held with Judge Forbes, "A Parkman Day." Mrs. Forbes read a paper on the revered first pastor, from whose diary she had read on the day of the incorporation of the Society. Mrs. Leach presented a sketch of the Parkman Family, of whom many distinguished representatives were present. A drive was taken to nine sites once familiar to Mr. Parkman. Dr. Corey also read a poem on "The Philosophy of Tom Cook."

In October, 1891, was the next field day, at which "The Rice Family" was considered in a paper by Judge Forbes.

In June, 1893, the Society entertained some sixty guests from the Worcester Society of Antiquity, in a drive about town in four barges, visiting places of historic interest.

At the field day in June, 1894, fifty-six members braved the heat and drove over to Grafton where they were joined by friends from Worcester and visited various points of interest.

In June the next year, fifty-six went to Shrewsbury and visited the Old Pease Tavern, and the Ward house, where among many articles an autographic letter from General Washington to General Ward was shown. Sheriff Ward's old yellow gig with its white horse surrounded by members of the Society was photographed. We also visited the old Sumner parsonage with its beautiful old furniture. After dinner we went to the cemetery where were the graves of the Ward family. We also visited the famous balanced rock.

The field day in 1896, was passed in South Natick, sixty present. We visited "The Sam Lawson House," the famous Eliot Oak, five hundred years old, and the Historical Society Rooms in the Public Library. At dinner, speeches were made by Judge Forbes, Revs. Daniels and Dudley and President Smith. We came home by way of the Hunnewell Gardens.

The next June, we went to Boston, to Faneuil Hall, the Old State House, Old Granary Burying Ground, the Cemetery at King's Chapel, the Old North Church, to the Agassiz Museum at Cambridge, Memorial Hall and the Fogg Art Museum.

In 1898, the outing was in Lancaster. Some forty went. Mr. Nourse, the town historian, conducted the party

to the Unitarian church, of which Dr. Bartol had been pastor for fifty years, and to the Town Library. Afterwards there was a drive about town and about Clinton.

The next year fifty-three went to Worcester. We visited the Society of Antiquity, where Hon. A. S. Roe and Major Dodge addressed us, the U. S. Envelope Factory, the old Salisbury mansion, the American Antiquarian Society, the new Art Museum, the Isaiah Thomas house and the Probate Court room, where Judge Forbes exhibited several ancient manuscripts.

June 20, 1902, was field day in old Concord, where we visited the historical grounds and the places sacred to the memory of the greatest names in American literature.

September 5, 1904, was a notable day. A tablet in memory of the Rice Boys, who were captured August 8, 1704, by Indians, was set up at the Northwest corner of the Bartlett meadow, with an address later, on "The Rice Boys," by Judge Forbes.

The Eli Whitney tablet was dedicated at his birthplace. Hon. Mr. Roe gave the address. At the lunch in the orchard, Vice-President Walker presided. Mr. Newcomb described his model of the cotton gin. Letters were read from the inventor's grandson and granddaughter and from others. Mr. R. Bowman, a centenarian, was elected to membership. There were 250 present. In the afternoon a company climbed the adjacent pasture hill.

The next field day was on July 15, 1905, when some sixty persons gathered on Whitney Hill. Addresses were given by the President, Revs. Schuh and Walker and Mr. Newcomb.

In June, 1906, fifty members went to Wachusett Dam and Reservoir and to the Holder Memorial Building in Clinton. After lunch, in which we were royally aided by the society there, Dr. Corey spoke of his new residence in California and Judge Forbes of "The Forbes Homestead" and some newly discovered Parkman manuscripts.

In August, 1907, several members responded to the invitation of the Northborough Society and attended the public addresses at their town hall and at the placing of a tablet to mark the site of the Samuel Goodnow house on the Marlborough road.

Local History.

The chief interest of a historical society must gather around its local history. We find that steps were taken at the first meeting of our Society to examine old deeds and records in order to determine the names to be given to the hills of the town. Committees were then and later appointed to copy the inscriptions on the grave stones of our two oldest cemeteries. A cabinet of oak was made by Mr. B. B. Nourse from the timbers of the Old Arcade.

In May, 1890, a paper was read on "The old village church as it was in 1826."

In June, 1893, Mr. Fayerweather related many interesting stories of his boyhood days and in October many members told of their early school days.

When, in June, 1894, the Society entered its room in Post Office block, open house was held and many gifts were presented. At a house warming in October the record reads, "Many brought not frankincense and myrrh but what was to them more precious by association, books whose well worn pages had been lovingly scanned by dear old grandmothers and grandfathers." Besides these, pictures and other relics were given. In November a collection of Alaskan curios was bought.

The January meeting in 1895 was devoted to Horace Maynard. Papers were read which had been prepared by his son Commander W. Maynard and by his neighbor Capt. W. Rule.

In October, 1896, Judge Forbes gave a delightful talk on "The first church of Westborough," with curious incidents, methods of church discipline and government in those early days.

In December, 1902, the topic was "Local Historical Landmarks." Judge Forbes spoke of the noted men of the town; Mrs. Forbes, of marking the birthplace of Eli Whitney and the sites of the two first church buildings; Mr. Bates, of Eli Whitney and especially of his invention of the "Uniformity system in making firearms"; Mrs. Bates, of marking the graves of the old Revolutionary soldiers and the site of the first Baptist church; Mr. Reilly, of a letter received by the selectmen relative to erecting a monument to Eli Whitney in the public square; Mr. G. B. Howe of Northborough, of the copying of the town records by the N. E. Historic Genealogical Society. A committee was appointed on marking historic sites.

In December, 1903, "The Forbes Family" was presented in a paper by Miss L. E. Forbes and "The Rice Family," by Judge Forbes.

September 20, 1905, the Society was represented by the President at the dedication of the Holder Memorial Building by the Clinton Society. He also attended, November 16, the setting up of a tablet to the minute men of the Revolution by the Shrewsbury Society. In December, there were addresses on matters of local interest by Revs. Schuh and Jacobs and Vice President Walker.

In January, 1906, Mrs. Forbes read a paper on "Stephen Maynard and his house." In March a paper on "The Forbush Tavern" was read by Miss M. L. Fisher. "The old residents of Piety Hill" were described by Mrs. Bates. "Character sketches of old citizens" were given by the Vice President. A committee was appointed to mark the graves of Revolutionary soldiers. On April 19, the room was opened to the members of the County C. E. Convention, of whom some three hundred visited us. A souvenir card had been presented to each member at their meeting, containing ten lines from Rev. Mr. Parkman's diary of April 19, 1775.

At a special meeting in May, Mrs. Gould presented papers on "The Breck Parkman Shop" and on "The Parkman Diaries." She also sent a letter offering the use of the Parkman manuscripts in her possession to the Society and ultimately the manuscripts themselves. They cover over six years. In October, Mrs. L. M. Brittan read a paper on "The Haskell House." Mrs. Bates gave interesting extracts from the Parkman diary of 1773. In December Mrs. E. M. Howell of Worcester read a paper on "The Thomas Whitney House" and presented an original deed of land and also her father's sword.

In January, 1907, the pastors of the several churches presented items on "Local church history." On April 9, the President attended a meeting of the Bostonian Society at which Dr. Jeffries presented the original records of a Harvard College Graduate Club of 1722. They were in the handwriting of young Parkman, the secretary.

In February, Mr. J. D. Estabrook of Northborough read a sketch of "The Governor Davis House and the Davis Family." Miss Spurr presented a

paper on "The Cobb House and Family."

In January, 1909, we met in Masonic Hall. Nearly two hundred were present. The topic was "The Fay Family.' There was a large chart with the different branches of the family on it from 1648 to 1909. Various papers and addresses were given by Mr. Herbert Fay and Judge Forbes of Worcester, Mr. A. P. Wilson, Mrs. C. M. Fay, Mrs. Bates, and Miss Jennie L. Fay. Letters were read from Revs. S. P. Fay and C. S. Pease, Messrs. A. B Fay and C. E. Fay, and other members of the family.

Library.

Another line of the Society's work has been in maintaining a library. There have been several purchases of books, and certain exchanges have been made. But largely the accessions have been from gifts. We have now some 1200 bound volumes that have been classified and catalogued with some hundreds of unbound volumes.

There are in all thirteen volumes of the transcribed copies of the Parkman Diary, covering a little over eight years. There are several scrap books containing obituary notices, war envelopes, articles on Indian subjects, church items and the like. The manuscripts of sermons, addresses, deeds and records must number between one and two hundred. There are also several valuable albums of photographs of persons and places of local interest.

Publications.

The use that the Society has made of the printing press is worthy of notice. In 1895 it published Rev. Mr. Weeks' four articles given at the meeting in February in book form with illustrations under the title of "The Tin Kitchen," at the cost of $35, and at a profit of $15.

Here we may mention also that in 1897, china plates with cups and other articles were prepared with prints of Eli Whitney and objects of local interest, at a cost of $75 and sold at a profit of $57.

In 1899, "The Story of the Cotton Gin," written by Mr. E. C. Bates, was reprinted from the N. E. Magazine, at a cost of $42 and sold at a profit of $18 with 250 copies on hand.

In 1906, "The Story of the Rice Boys," as written by Mr. Parkman in 1769, was printed at an expense of $8 and the sales have covered expenses with 112 copies on hand.

Halftone cuts of the Whitney and Rice Boys tablets were prepared at a cost of $14 and the sale of the prints has met this expense with 200 copies on hand or in books.

The card of invitation to the C. E. Convention was printed at cost of $4, and the expense met by gift.

In 1898 it was voted to obtain the Journal of Rev. Mr. Parkman in possession of Mrs. E. Tuckerman, with a view of copying the same for publication. Mrs. Forbes kindly offered to do the work, and also edited the same with most valuable notes. It was published at an expense of $647. There have been received from sales and special gifts $564, leaving a net expense to the Society of $83, with 112 bound copies and 500 copies in sheets on hand.

The copies of the Calendar of 1906 were sold at a profit of $39 and those of the Calendar for 1908 netted $5.

The edition of "Some Old Houses," cost $52, and has been sold at a small profit with 75 copies on hand.

The edition of "More Old Houses," cost $162 and stands the Society about

$50 cost, with 89 copies on hand.

The total profit of ten of these publications has been $134.52, and the cost of two of them has been $133.40, a net profit on all of $1.12 with the stock on hand including two volumes of the Town History valued at over $200.

Articles.

Under this head we include various relics, pieces of furniture, book cases, kitchen furnishings, revolutionary relics, bric-a-brac of great variety, articles of industrial art, fancy needlework, samplers, various embroideries and the like.

All these need special inspection and re-arranging and classifying, so that they may be intelligently used in illustrating the history of the times they represent.

Membership.

A list of our members shows that of the twenty-three who were charter members in 1889, only three names remain on our list, Dr. and Mrs. Harvey and Mr. Henry. The next seven names remaining are those of Misses Nourse, Forbes and Eddy, Mrs. Gould and Bates, and Messrs. Brigham and Reilly. In all there have been 353 names entered, of whom 128 are still on our list.

Of the fourteen corresponding members two have died, Mr. Francis Parkman and Miss Eliza S. Parkman.

There have been six presidents, Mr. Fayerweather four years, Dr. Corey two years, Judge Forbes two years, Rev. Mr. Weeks one year, Mr. Walker five years and Rev. Mr. Briant six years.

The Treasury.

The receipts from fees have been $2,188, from entertainments $404, for tablets $101 and for the debt $104, in all $2,797. To this should be added from sales of publications $1,072, making the total receipts $3,869.

The publishing fund was established in 1906. This comprises all gifts and the proceeds of all sales. The donors have been Mr. Cyrus Gale of Northborough, $10, Mr. Joseph S. Fay, Jr., of Boston, $100, Mr. Levi Holbrook of New York, $10, Mr. Henry Parkman of Boston, $25, and Mrs. Helen R. Edson of Scotsville, N. Y., $10, in all $155. To this is to be added from sales and dividends, $255, making the receipts $410. There has been paid for printing and copying $253, leaving in the fund $157.

Former Residents.

The interest shown by these in all matters pertaining to the history of the town of their birth or their ancestors, is very marked. We have repeatedly had occasion to see this in conversation with such as have visited here or as they have corresponded with the Society about its publications.

The appreciation thus shown has been outspoken and very encouraging. We have been able to be of service to some in looking up their ancestry. One of many utterances reads: "As 'one of the family,' I want to thank you for the excellent work done in behalf of the Fays in the booklet, 'More Old Houses'." In one instance we aided in replacing a broken stone in Memorial cemetery, for which the donor wrote: "I hasten to thank you most cordially for the great service you have done me."

We have a list of over fifty interested ones from Maine to California, who have written in a similar vein, their gratitude for favors received through the work of the Society. It is well to attain a reputation that commends us

to others. It was greatly to our credit that at a meeting of the Bay State Historical League last Saturday, Mr. Roe could speak so highly of the work of our Society. I deemed it a high honor for him to call on me to speak as your representative. Let us be quick to see this and prompt to foster the interest thus awakened by every means at our disposal.

Our Own Needs.

We, also, need to cherish for our own sake the sentiments that gather about this good old town and the associations of the past. Every one of us here can help in keeping this feeling alive. Perhaps we can do this in no better way than in sustaining the work of this Society.

This review of its twenty years history,—this list of topics presented, and of the noteworthy persons named,—has not failed to impress us with the wisdom of those who laid the foundations and have so well built upon them. It surely becomes us to appreciate their work and to sustain it for our own good and for those who shall follow us.

It is for this end that the directors have planned this meeting. It is their hope and confident expectation that this gathering will be a rallying point at which we shall find a renewal of interest on the part of many who have helped us in the past. We hope, also, that the interest of others will be enlisted in so filling up our ranks that we may go forward in our various lines of work most successfully.

TWENTY YEARS

OF THE

WESTBOROUGH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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